

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAJ-01 SAM-01 IO-13 AID-05 /088 W

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R 301008Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6818

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 1843

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID PFOR FR GW JA LA

SUBJECT: FRENCH SEE LAO DESIRE TO BROADEN TIES WITH WEST

SUMMARY: SOME ELEMENTS WITHIN THE LPDR LEADERSHIP ARE SEEKING TO BROADEN LAO CONTACTS WITH WESTERN NATIONS TO OBTAIN MORE AID, ACCORDING TO A FRENCH DIPLOMATIC SOURCE. THE FRENCH EMBASSY IS ANXIOUS TO RESPOND TO THIS INTEREST AND HAS SOUGHT TO RAISE THE LEVEL OF A FRENCH DELEGATION WHICH WAS INVITED BY THE PDR TO VISIT LAOS IN LATE AUGUST. END SUMMARY.

1. MAURICE PORTICHE, THIRD SECRETARY AT THE FRENCH EMBASSY (PTOTECT), TOLD EMBOFF ON JULY 29 THAT MAYSOUK SAYSOMPHENG, LPDR MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE, ABOUT JULY 9, CALLED DIRECTORS WITHIN THE MINISTRY TO A MEETING AT WHICH HE ANNOUNCED THAT HENCEFORTH THE PDR GOVERNMENT WOULD SEEK CLOSER TIES WITH WESTERN NATIONS.

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2. MAYSOUK SPECIFICALLY NAMED JAPAN, WEST GERMANY, FRANCE

AND THE THE UNITED STATES AS COUNTRIES WITH WHOM THE LPDR WOULD TRY TO IMPROVE RELATIONS IN HOPES OF REALIZING TECHNOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE.

3. PORTICHE ELABORATED ON HIS PERSPECTIVE THAT THE LPDR LEADERSHIP WAS BECOMING FACTIONALIZED. HE CHARACTERIZED THE FACTIONS AS THE PRAGMATISTS, WHO FAVOR DEVELOPMENTAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE WEST AND WHO ARE LED BY SOUPHANOUVONG AND PHOUMI VONGVICHIT, AND THE IDEOLOGUES, WHO FAVOR MAINTAINING A HARD LINE TOWARD THE WEST AND ARE LED BY KAYSONE PHOMVIHANE.

4. PORTICHE PORTAYED THE FRENCH EMBASSY AS VERY ANXIOUS TO RESPOND TO ANY DEVELOPING LAO INTEREST IN EXPANDED TIES TO THE WEST. HE EXPLAINED THA THE LAO HAD INDICATED TO THE FRENCH THAT THEY WANTED THE DELEGATION WHICH THE LPDR HAD INVITED TO VISIT LAOS AT THE END OF AUGUST TO BE LED BY A HIGH RANKING OFFICIAL. THE EMBASSY HAS CONSEQUENTLY RECOMMENDED TO THE QUAI THAT THE DELEGATION BE LED BY A SECRETARY OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.
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